



**Quotes from CARE's Member Organizations
Upon Release of *"America's Wildlife Refuges 2013: Delivering the Unexpected"***

Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

"The National Wildlife Refuge System is part of the spine of quality habitats that interconnect with state, private and other federal lands to sustain fish and wildlife and support recreation for tens of millions of hunters, anglers, birders and other outdoor enthusiasts. Strong and adequately funded national wildlife refuges not only safeguard our natural heritage but are vital to our economy as well."

—Ron Regan, Executive Director

Defenders of Wildlife

"No federal program can do its job well without sufficient funding. This report makes it clear that budget cuts to our National Wildlife Refuge System don't just hurt refuges and the wildlife resources that they are designed to protect, but people and affected local communities too. And conversely, a fully funded Refuge System can benefit us all in a myriad of important ecological and economical ways. After years of inadequate funding for the Refuge System, we simply can't afford to tighten the purse strings on our refuges any further."

—Jamie Rappaport Clark, President

Ducks Unlimited

"Every state has at least one wildlife refuge and their protection benefits far more than the sportsmen and outdoor enthusiasts who frequent them. The lands in America's wildlife refuges help keep our waters and air clean, provide critical habitat to waterfowl and other wildlife, and support more than 30,000 jobs nationwide. Congress must adequately fund the refuge system to ensure Americans can continue to enjoy and benefit from these lands."

—Gary Taylor, Director of Government Affairs

National Rifle Association

"Hunters have been the backbone of the National Wildlife Refuge System dating back to 1903 when President Theodore Roosevelt established Pelican Island as the first wildlife refuge. Since the 1930s, hunters have contributed nearly \$25 million annually and over \$750 million in total, through Duck Stamp purchases for the acquisition of critical wildlife refuge habitat. This citizen-based revenue for land acquisition is unparalleled in federal and state land systems and exemplifies the unique role that hunters play in wildlife conservation throughout the country. The NRA supports CARE's efforts to protect the hunter's investment in our Refuge System and looks forward to continuing a productive and successful partnership with all the organizations participating in CARE."

—Susan Recce, Director of Conservation, Wildlife and Natural Resources

The Nature Conservancy

“The National Wildlife Refuge System is a gem of our nation’s public lands. The Refuge System provides immeasurable habitat value for our nation’s fish and wildlife resources, as well as recreational value for hunters, anglers, birdwatchers, hikers and visitors alike. In addition, refuges offer natural infrastructure benefits such as open space protection and storm surge buffers for communities across the nation. Strong annual funding for the Refuge System is imperative to ensure the numerous public benefits provided by this system are sustained into the future.”

—Bob Bendick, Director of U.S. Government Relations

The Wilderness Society

“Funding to maintain America’s National Wildlife Refuges has not kept pace with the needs of the National Wildlife Refuge System for years – and this shortfall is being dangerously exacerbated by sequestration cuts. America’s National Wildlife Refuges are some of the most spectacular and accessible wild lands in America – combining critical habitat protection with recreation and educational opportunities for communities. Already threatened by climate change, invasive species, and encroaching development, it is imperative that National Wildlife Refuges be further strengthened, not weakened, in the coming years.”

—Jamie Williams, President

The Wildlife Society

“Refuges are essential for the conservation of our nation’s wildlife and their habitats, and they also provide a natural laboratory for wildlife biologists who are engaged in field research efforts. The Wildlife Society encourages Congress to provide the necessary investments in the Refuge System to allow it to continue to provide these, and myriad other, benefits.”

—Ken Williams, Executive Director